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NEWSLETTER

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arrested by Sudanese security officials as they were demonstrating in front of the headquarters of Sudan Security in the Hai Mattar district of Khartoum. The demonstration marked the commemoration of the execution of 28 army officers on 24 April 1990. The women arrested are relatives of the victims. It has been reported that a number of these women were assaulted by the security officials as they were arrested. A old woman is reported to have been beaten and dragged along the ground. The women are reported to be currently detained at the headquarters of the Security Service.

We have also been informed about the arrest of 9 other women and a child on 31 March 1992, and who are been detained in the Omdurman Women's Prison. These people have been arrested at a previous demonstration which took place in Khartoum where they entered the Presidential Palace. Among these people is a child, a woman with a heart condition and a nursing mother who has been denied access to her baby.

We would like to express our concern at the arrests of all these women who, according to international law, were expressing their fundamental right to freedom of expression and association. We also would like to protest firmly about the alleged assault of these women.

We therefore urge you to release the women immediately and unconditionally and at least ensure that they are treated humanly and that they have immediate and regular access to their families, lawyers and medical attention. ./."

ASIA & PACIFIC

East Timor

■ *Pax Christi International made an intervention at the UN Decolonisation Committee, 27 July 1992:*

"Mr. Chairman and Honourable Members of the Committee,

Pax Christi International welcomes this opportunity to speak of the situation in East Timor. Our organization has made interventions on East Timor before the UN Human Rights Commission consistently since 1983. An underlying premise of our interventions is that the people of East Timor have a right to self-determination, in accord with the principles of the United Nations itself, and that this right has been violated by the action of Indonesia. Today we speak on behalf of a proposal for a process of dialogue under UN auspices, without preconditions, to explore all possible options towards a comprehensive settlement of the problem of Indonesian control of East Timor.

We do not intend to review here the legal premises and arguments for a referendum on self-determination for the people of East Timor, nor to recall the sorry history of military invasion of East Timor by Indonesia. We do want to point out several recent factors which give hope for resolving a situation that has cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of people who have been the victims of an attempt to solve the conflict between East Timor and Indonesia by violence:

First, Indonesian efforts to appease the East Timorese by material incentives, by spending large sums of money on developing East Timor's administrative and economic infrastructure, have failed. This was made clear by a 1990 report, commissioned by the Bank of Indonesia and the Provincial Government of East

Europe. They owe it to themselves to actively participate in its construction.

Each of the stages should allow young people to discover possible areas of commitment: each city where the tour halts will bear a specific theme to reflect on:

Lille (27/12)
Meeting point for all members of the core group to leave together by bus.

Brussels (27/12): For a responsible Europe
The choice of theme has been motivated by the fact that the seat of the European Commission is in Brussels. It is concerned with seeing where to situate the responsibility of each individual in the Europe of tomorrow.

Luxembourg (28/12): For a Europe in solidarity
The cosmopolitan character of Luxembourg and the number of immigrants living and working there invites us to look beyond the frontiers of Europe to reflect on the role of Europe in relation to the Third World.

Trier (29/12): The Europe of many histories for one History
As an ancient Roman imperial town, Trier reminds us that attempts to build a unified Europe go far back in history. But the course of time also reveals many 'histories' - conflicts, wars, alliances - which have shaken the history of this Europe in search of itself.

Strasbourg (30/12): For a Europe of fellowship
Strasbourg is the seat of the Council of Europe. Its vocation is to welcome all European countries, especially those of the centre and east who have acceded to democracy. It is a matter of responding to their expectations. The seat of the European Court of Human Rights is also found there. This invites a reflection on rights.

Metz (31/12): A soul for Europe
The house in which Robert Schumann, one of the fathers of Europe, lived is found near Metz. He is also buried there. It was because he wanted peace for Europe that he put his life's work into its construction. It was because he was filled with an ardent faith that he committed himself to the service of Europe. Europe cannot be itself if it does not rediscover the path of spiritual values.

The three Borders, (31/12-01/01)
Meeting for a new departure...

For more information contact Pax Christi France

AFRICA

Somalia

■ *On 23 June 1992, Michel Ansay, President of Pax Christi Wallonia, sent letters to the Prime Minister and to the Minister of Justice in Belgium concerning the dramatic situation in Somalia:*

"./. The calvary of the population of Somalia cannot leave any Belgian indifferent. We ask our government to support the efforts of the High Commissioner for Refugees in every possible way - transport, food, medicines and particularly by giving considerable financial support. We are aware of the effectiveness of the High Commissioner for Refugees; it is nevertheless, limited through lack of resources. ./."

Sudan

■ *In May 1992, Pax Christi Flanders sent a letter of concern to Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Head of State in Sudan:*

"./. It has come to our attention that on 1 April 1992, 15 women were reportedly

Timor, and carried out by the Indonesian University of Gadjah Mada. Based on sociological fieldwork, the report confirmed that the East Timorese were deeply alienated from Indonesian rule. In explaining the alienation, the report drew attention to the prevalence of abuse, violence, and corruption, and concluded that the economic passivity of the East Timorese resulted primarily from this political alienation and would not be solved by economic subsidies. Many Indonesian NGOs are now deeply troubled by the situation in East Timor. They believe that the situation should be regarded fundamentally as a political issue which demands a political response. They are advocating dialogue involving the East Timorese.

Second, support for East Timorese self-determination is extensive and growing in many countries. The November Santa Cruz massacre was, without a doubt, a major factor in changing the conviction of many key people all over the world. For the first time, the US House of Representatives voted to ban military aid to Indonesia because of Indonesian action in East Timor. An International Federation for East Timor was created by all participating NGOs at the 11th Consultative Meeting on East Timor. Clearly, international concern is growing and expressing itself in ever more concrete ways.

Third, the international political context is conducive to an Indonesian reappraisal of its present relations with East Timor and with the outside world over East Timor. Potential for both violent and nonviolent political change has been abundantly demonstrated in recent months, with a growing recognition of the possibility of constructive dialogue, and the intolerable cost when military means are used to repress the aspirations of peoples to self-determination.

We support, therefore, the proposal recently outlined before the European Parliament calling for a peace process in three phases under UN auspices. In the first phase, lasting for one or two years, Portugal and Indonesia would begin talks. This phase would not necessitate East Timorese direct involvement, but would have the UN act as go-between. The focus of this first phase would be on achieving an immediate end to all the armed activities in East Timor, the immediate and unconditional release of all East Timorese political prisoners, and the reduction of Indonesian military personnel in East Timor to 1,000 within a six-month period. Other objectives of the talks would be the removal from East Timor of all heavy weapons and a substantial reduction of Indonesian civil servants in East Timor.

The talks would also deal with access to the territory of East Timor by UN specialized agencies, such as Unicef, UNDP, WHO, etc. The proposal further calls for the establishment of a Human Rights Commission to be set up in Dili, the lifting of press censorship, freedom of political activities and assembly, and the removal of restrictions on the teaching of Portuguese. The UN Secretary-General would appoint a resident representative responsible for all UN activities in East Timor, including reporting on the implementation of the accords.

This proposal anticipates a second phase, lasting from two to five years, during which elections would be held for a local Assembly. The UN would provide technical support and supervision of the election. At the end of this phase, there would be preparations for a referendum on self-determination followed by general elections for a Constituent Assembly.

There are further details in this proposal, readily available, which we cannot treat here. We favour this proposal because it is based on the clear case for East Ti-

morese self-determination, and also on political realism. It provides a way out of a situation that can only grow worse if an alternative is not found. With every day of delay, the cost measured in human suffering increases for this and future generations of the people of East Timor, and also for Indonesia. Now is the moment to move vigorously with a creative plan for a just negotiated settlement.

We call on Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali to make a solution of the East Timor question a priority during his term of office. We urge that the 1982 Resolution of the General Assembly on East Timor, which directed the Secretary-General to find a solution involving all the parties involved, be reactivated. The process towards a solution must include the East Timorese themselves. Without their participation and consent there can be no lasting solution."

* * *

■ *On 6 July 1992, Justitia et Pax and Pax Christi Netherlands sent a letter to Mr. H. Van den Broek, Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands:*

" ./. On the occasion of your planned visit to Indonesia, the Commission Justitia et Pax, Cebemo, the Centraal Missie Commissariaat, the Centraal Missionair Beraad Religieuzen and Pax Christi would like to draw your attention to the following:

Earlier this year, on the occasion of the visit of the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs to The Hague, we conveyed to you our deep concern about the trial of East Timorese citizens. In the reply which we received from Mr De Jong of the Bureau on South Asia and Indonesia, we were once again assured that the Dutch government is closely monitoring the fate and the trial of the detained East Timorese. This is also expressed in the EC *Statement on East Timor* of 13 February 1992: 'The Community calls on the Indonesian authorities to ensure that all the East Timorese arrested on the occasion of the Dili shooting are treated humanely, that those not involved in violent activities are released without delay and that those brought to court are assured of proper legal representation and fair trials.'

We realize that the possibilities which are now available to the Dutch government for influencing the behaviour of the Indonesian government in the field of human rights are limited, as a result of the recent developments in the relationship between both governments. Nevertheless, we want to ask you to use the occasion of your forthcoming visit to Indonesia to raise our concern about the human rights situation in East Timor.

In this context, we bring the following issues to your attention:

- Even if during the last few weeks various military and police functionaries have been brought to trial, risking disciplinary imprisonment of 8-18 months, none of the indictments referred to the murder of innocent citizens. On the other hand, East Timorese having participated in the commemorative meeting on 12 November in Dili and in a peaceful demonstration in Jakarta on 19 November 1991 have been sentenced to long prison terms.
- The condemned East Timorese have committed no crimes, however. On the contrary, their activities solely consisted of standing up for their right to demonstrate peacefully and for their inalienable right to self-determination. Moreover, during their trials, several East Timorese and their lawyers pointed out that it is doubtful whether the East Timorese can be considered as Indonesian citizens. One may ask oneself whether East Timorese can be tried under Indonesian laws.

- We especially express our indignation at the trials held in Dili, because we understood that among foreign observers little is known about the trial procedures. And yet a life sentence was demanded against Gregorio da Cunha Saldanha on the basis of the controversial Indonesian anti-subversion law.
  As you know, other Timorese have been sentenced under this law during the last few months: Fernando de Araujo (Jakarta, sentenced to 9 years imprisonment); Joao Freitas da Camara (Jakarta, 10 years imprisonment); Jacinto das Neves Raimundo Alves (Dili, 10 years imprisonment); Juvencio de Jesus Martins (Dili, 8 years imprisonment); Saturnino da Costa Belo (Bacau, 9 years imprisonment); Francisco Mirando Branco (Dili, 15 years imprisonment were demanded); Carlos dos Santos Lemos (10 years imprisonment demanded). Others have been sentenced to lighter penalties on the basis of the Indonesian penal law.
- We ask your attention especially for Joao Freitas da Camara. He is one of the four students who in 1986 sought asylum in the Dutch embassy. Since then a Portuguese passport has been waiting for him in the embassy. The Indonesian authorities have prevented his departure by refusing him an exit visa.
- The declarations of the new commander of East Timor, Theo Syafei, give little cause for optimism. Since his appointment he has repeatedly declared 'not to be as patient' as his predecessor. In apparent contradiction to this is the report that Indonesia wants to withdraw a number of battalions from East Timor and possibly to abolish the Kolakops, making this operational commando part of the regular Indonesian armed forces.
  We point out, however, that such cosmetic operations have taken place before. To our knowledge the extra troops which were stationed in East Timor last year on the occasion of the scheduled visit of the Portuguese parliamentary delegation, have not been withdrawn.
  Probably the Indonesian authorities want to bring more clarity in the military commando structures operating in East Timor. It is no secret that there are tensions between the regular Korem commando, resorting under the Kodam IX/Udayana commando in Bali, and the Kolakops. This seems totally with the declarations of Theo Syafei, that the territorial military structure has to be fine-tuned and that 'quiet and order' should now be enforced. In this, regional troops seem to have become more important than combat troops, also because of the fact that resistance in East Timor has grown, especially in the urban areas. The declared change of military policy does not mean, however, that at present there are no active military operations against the armed resistance. Theo Syafei himself announced that the military activities in the south of East Timor will be stepped up. Moreover, a greater clarity in military commando structures does in our view not lead directly to a demilitarization of the region, nor to respect for human rights in East Timor.
- The commander-in-chief of the Indonesian armed forces, Try Sutrisno, has to our knowledge not yet carried out the order of President Suharto to find out the position of those 'missing' since the massacre. You may find an occasion to discuss this with your hosts.
- Finally we ask you to urge your Indonesian and Portuguese colleagues to reopen, as soon as possible, the dialogue under UN auspices concerning a lasting solution to the East Timorese conflict, in which the right to self-determination of the East Timorese population is acknowledged. ./."